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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the values that influence teachers, future school administrators, and future school counselors in choosing their respective professions. A 15-item questionnaire was developed consisting of six categories: (1) stimulating work; (2) interpersonal satisfaction; (3) economic security; (4) responsible autonomy; (5) comfortable existence; and (6) esthetic concerns. Subjects (N=123) were graduate students seeking permanent certification as teachers, administrator candidates, or counselor candidates. In the area of economic security, administrators wanted to obtain money and prestige, and teachers wanted security. Counseling candidates, on the other hand, were not motivated by economic security issues. None of the three groups indicated power as a strong motivator for seeking their respective professions, but more than half of the members of the three groups wanted to make their own decision and exhibit leadership. Differences among the three groups were found when considering comfortable existence, with all three groups seeking a good place to work, and teachers and counselors wanting good schedules and good vacations. Although all three groups wanted to improve education, counseling candidates were not nearly as motivated as teachers and administrator candidates were to help their respective vocations. Although counselors, teachers, and administrators may enter the education arena to improve education, they choose their specific careers for different reasons. (LLL)

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The Influence of Values

on

Vocational Choices of School Administrators, Counselors, and Teachers

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Introduction

Various vocational opportunities exist within the school environment. Educators may choose to teach subjects ranging from art and music to those concentrating on math and science. They may choose to work with children as young as 5 to adolescents 17 to 18 years of age. Furthermore, within the schools, opportunities exist for careers in nursing, psychology, library science and the like. Counseling and administration are two other areas which may attract adults within the field of education. What are the reasons individuals make career choices? Why do some individuals choose to become teachers, others choose to become counselors within the school, and yet others decide to become school administrators?

The reasons individuals enter their respective positions have been studied by many within the field of occupational development. Authors such as Super (1975) in *The Psychology of Careers*, and Holland (1973) in *Making Vocational Choices: A Theory of Careers* suggest that a relationship between occupational choice and values exists. Further, researchers such as Bridges (1989), Cochran (1986), and Hales and Waggoner (1985) have found that work values affect vocational choices.

In order to assess the effect of values in the world of work, Hales and Fenner (1973) constructed the Ohio Work Values Inventory which consists of 77 items used to measure 11 work values including: (1) Altruism, (2) Control, (3) Ideas/Data Orientation, (4) Independence, (5) Money, (6) Object Orientation, (7) Prestige, (8) Security, (9) Self-Realization, (10) Solitude, and (11) Task Satisfaction. Likewise, Wollack, Goodale, Wijting and Smith (1976), developed the Survey of Work Values which contains 54 items and 6 scales (9 items per scale) including: (1) Social Status of Job, (2) Activity Preference, (3) Upward Striving, (4) Attitude Toward Earnings, (5) Pride in Work, and (6) Job Involvement. Similarly, Super (1970) developed the Work Values Inventory consisting of 45 items to assess 15 values including: (1) Intellectual Stimulation, (2) Job Achievement, (3) Way of Life, (4) Economic Returns, (5) Altruism, (6) Creativity, (7)

Relationship with Associates, (8) Job Security, (9) Prestige, (10) Management of Others, (11) Variety, (12) Aesthetics, (13) Independence, (14) Supervisory Relationship, and (15) Physical Surroundings. Using factor analysis, Bolton (1980) delineated 6 second-order dimensions within Super's Work Values Inventory. These dimensions include: (1) Stimulating Work, (2) Interpersonal Satisfaction, (3) Economic Security, (4) Responsible Autonomy, (5) Comfortable Existence, and (6) Esthetic Concerns.

While interest and investigation of values and their effect on vocational choice is not new, there has been little research aimed specifically at individuals within the educational environment. The purpose of the present study was to investigate the values that influence teachers, future school administrators, and future school counselors to enter their respective professions.

Method

Sample

The sample included 123 persons enrolled in graduate courses at California State University, Stanislaus. Enrollment included 39(32%) individuals enrolled in courses required to obtain a Clear Teaching Credential (obtained after receiving a preliminary credential and completing additional required coursework), 44 (35%) individuals enrolled in courses required to obtain a preliminary Administrative Services Credential, and 40 (33%) individuals enrolled in courses required to obtain a Pupil Personnel Services Credential (School Counseling). Participants consisted of individuals whose ages ranged from 21-60, with over 80% between the ages of 26 and 45. When asked to indicate their sex, 4 (3%) individuals did not respond, 38 (31%) indicated they were male, and 81 (66%) indicated female. Of the 123 respondents, 27 (22%) had taught 1 to 3 years; 16 (13%) taught for 4 to 6 years; 7 (6%) taught 7 to 10 years; 16 (13%) taught for 11-15years; 9 (7%) had taught for 16 to 25 years; and 3 (3%) individuals had more than 25

years of teaching experience. The remaining respondents (36%) did not answer this question and one might assume they have never been employed as teachers. As for the grade level at which participants taught, 37% taught at the elementary level; 23% taught at the secondary level; 22% indicated they had worked at both levels; 18% did not answer this question.

Questionnaire Development

Initially, 22 students enrolled in section one of a microcomputer course required for obtaining a clear credential were asked to respond to the open-ended statement " I obtained a teaching credential in order to... ." Based on the responses, 8 items and one open ended question "other, please specify" were used for a pilot instrument. The pilot questionnaire used a Likert-type scale with 4 response categories ("Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Disagree," and "Strongly Disagree"). Twenty-five students enrolled in a second section of the microcomputer course completed the pilot questionnaire. These students responded to the 9 items in relation to (a) why they obtained a teaching credential, (b) why they thought most individuals become teachers, (c) why they thought most individuals become administrators, and (d) why they thought most individuals become school counselors. A professor and a Dean of Education also reviewed the pilot instrument.

After reviewing suggestions, responses of the students, and a review of the literature, the items were reworded and the number increased. The final instrument consisted of 15 items that included 3 items within each of 5 categories. These categories correlated with second order dimensions of the Work Values Inventory as defined by Bolton (1980) and included:

1. Stimulating Work (mentally challenged, problem solving, changes in job),
2. Interpersonal Satisfaction (feel you have helped, well being of others,help others),
3. Economic Security (paid enough, sure of job, gain prestige),
4. Responsible Autonomy (authority over others, make own decisions, use

leadership abilities),

5. Comfortable Existence (good place to work, lead enjoyable life, good life away from work).

The sixth dimension (Esthetic Concerns) of the Work Values Inventory was not considered applicable in the context of schools, nor was it specified in the pilot study; therefore, it was not included in the instrument.

Three forms of the Reasons Individuals Become Administrators, Counselors, or Teachers (RIGBACT) Questionnaire were developed. More specifically, those individuals enrolled in courses in the administrative services program completed Form A; those individuals enrolled in the school counseling program completed From C; and those seeking a clear teaching credential completed Form T. Items in each form were the same and correlated with five of the six second order dimensions as defined in the Ohio Work Values inventory. The initial statement, however, varied with the group. That is, Form A included "I am working to obtain an Administrative Services credential in order to... ." Form C included "I am working to obtain a Pupil Personnel Services credential in order to... ." Form T included "I obtained a teaching credential in order to... ." In addition, items such as "I think that most individuals become teachers in order to... ."; "I think that most individuals become school administrators in order to... ."; and "I think most individuals become school counselors in order to... ." were included in the instrument. Responses to these last three items, however, are not considered relevant to the present study; therefore, they are not included in this paper.

Procedure

Instructors for three administrative services classes, three school counseling classes, and two clear credential classes at California State University, Stanislaus administered the questionnaire to their respective classes. Participants were asked to answer anonymously and students enrolled in more than one course where the instrument was administered were asked to complete only one survey instrument. Individuals who

were absent during the administration of the instrument, did not participate.

Data Analysis

As indicated in Table 1, teachers seeking permanent certification, school counseling candidates, and administrative services candidates all agreed they enter their respective professions to (a) be mentally challenged, (b) improve education, (c) solve problems, and (d) lead. Likewise, all three educational groups agreed when they did not see themselves as motivated to obtain power. When considering money as a career value, administrators value this highly as 77% percent of these individuals agreed they were pursing their career to obtain enough money. On the other hand, only 37.5% of the counseling candidates and 36% of the teachers indicated that money motivated them to chose their professions. Of the three groups, administrators (56.5%) were most likely to think of their profession as a way to gain prestige. Helping students seems to be the strongest value for counselors with 97.5% agreeing that this influenced their career decision. Both administrator candidates (86%) and those seeking permanent certification as teachers (77%) want to help their professions, while less than half (45%) the school counseling candidates indicated such motivation. Security seemed important to teachers as 67% agreed this influenced their entering the teaching profession. Only 20% of the administrative candidates and 23% of the counseling students, however, indicated they were motivated by security. Good schedules seemed important to counselors and teachers (60% and 72% respectively), but not to administrators (27.5%). Teachers (87%) seemed to value having a good place to work and being able to make their own decisions. Administrators, on the other hand, did want to make their own decisions but they did not strongly value having a good place to work (50% disagreed with this statement). Similarly, teachers want good vacations, but both counseling candidates (50%) and future administrators (70%) disagreed that good vacations were among the reasons they wanted to enter their professions. As one might expect, all three groups were motivated to change their jobs in order to enter their respective professions.

Discussion

It is obvious that different individuals are differentially motivated to enter different vocations within the education profession. At least 50% of the future administrators, school counselors and teachers want Stimulating Work (to be mentally challenged, solve problems, change jobs). The three groups desire Interpersonal Satisfaction (help the profession, improve education, help students), but future counselors did not indicate a need to help the profession. In the area of Economic Security (receive enough money, security, gain prestige), administrators want to obtain money and prestige, and teachers want security. Counseling candidates, on the other hand, are not motivated by these work values. It is interesting to note that none of the three groups indicated power as a strong motivator for seeking their respective professions, but greater than 50% of all three groups want to make their own decsion and exhibit leadership (Responsible Autonomy). Differences among the three group are found when considering Comfortable Existence, with all three groups seeking a good place to work, and teachers and counselors wanting good schedules and good vacations.

It is not surprising to find differences in valuing Economic Security among the three groups. With administrator salaries being much higher than those of counselors and teachers, it could be expected that individuals seeking greater financial reward would train for positions that afforded them such monetary gain. While not concerned about money per se, job security seems important to teachers. Given the fact that teachers can obtain tenure and typically are at the low end of salary offerings when compared to individuals with comparable education, this result is not surprising. It may be that the secure position compensates for the lower pay. Conversely, administrators may be willing to give up tenure and secure positions for the extra remuneration they receive.

When considering the dimension of Comfortable Existence, teachers seem most influenced by having a good place to work and want good vacations. Once again, this may account for their willingness to work for lower pay than other individuals with similar

educational qualifications.

That 97.5% of the future counselors valued helping students would be expected, as the purpose of counseling is to help. In fact, it would be unusual to find counseling candidates who did not express such desires. It is most interesting to note, however, that although all three groups want to improve education, counseling candidates were not nearly as motivated (45%) as teachers (77%) and administrator candidates (86%) were to help their respective vocations. Perhaps this indicates a greater degree of satisfaction with the role of counselor within the schools.

In summary, it seems that there are both commonalities and differences in values among those who enter the vocations of teaching , school administration, and school counseling. Although counselors, teachers and administrators may enter the educational arena to improve education, they choose their specific career for different reasons.

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Table 1
Reasons Individuals Become Administrators, Counselors, & Teachers

N =123	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Dimension 1: Stimulating Work:				
Mentally Challenged				
Administrators	23.0%	59.0%	16.0%	2.0%
Counselors	22.5%	57.5%	10.0%	10.0%
Teachers	41.0%	28.0%	20.5%	10.5%
Solve Problems				
Administrators	32.0%	59.0%	9.0%	0.0%
Counselors	25.0%	65.0%	7.5%	2.5%
Teachers	13.0%	59.0%	15.0%	13.0%
Change Job				
Administrators	25.0%	43.0%	27.0%	5.0%
Counselors	30.0%	47.5%	17.5%	5.0%
Teachers	26.0%	33.0%	18.0%	23.0%
Dimension 2: Interpersonal Satisfaction				
Help Profession				
Administrators	36.0%	50.0%	14.0%	0.0%
Counselors	7.5%	37.5%	40.0%	15.0%
Teachers	38.5%	38.5%	18.0%	5.0%
Improve Education				
Administrators	59.0%	36.0%	5.0%	0.0%
Counselors	55.0%	35.0%	7.5%	2.5%
Teachers	41.0%	41.0%	13.0%	5.0%
Help Students				
Administrators	59.0%	32.0%	9.0%	0.0%
Counselors	90.0%	7.5%	0.0%	2.5%
Teachers	71.0%	26.0%	0.0%	3.0%
Dimension 3: Economic Security				
Enough Money				
Administrators	27.0%	50.0%	18.0%	5.0%
Counselors	12.5%	25.0%	50.0%	12.5%
Teachers	8.0%	28.0%	36.0%	28.0%
Security				
Administrators	4.0%	16.0%	57.0%	23.0%
Counselors[a]	2.5%	22.5%	55.0%	20.0%
Teachers	20.5%	49.0%	20.5%	10.0%
Gain Prestige				
Administrators	20.5%	36.0%	39.0%	4.5%
Counselors	2.5%	25.0%	55.0%	17.5%
Teachers	2.5%	36.0%	41.0%	20.5%

Dimension 4: Responsible Autonomy				
Power				
Administrators	2.0%	25.0%	50.0%	23.0%
Counselors	2.5%	2.5%	45.0%	50.0%
Teachers	0.0%	18.0%	31.0%	51.0%
Make Own Decisions				
Administrators	14.0%	57.0%	23.0%	7.0%
Counselors	12.5%	67.5%	17.5%	2.5%
Teachers	33.5%	46.0%	20.5%	0.0%
Leadership				
Administrators	43.0%	57.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Counselors[b]	41.0%	46.0%	8.0%	5.0%
Teachers	23.0%	72.0%	5.0%	0.0%
Dimension 5: Comfortable Existence				
Good Place to Work				
Administrators	7.0%	43.0%	45.0%	5.0%
Counselors	17.5%	52.5%	22.5%	7.5%
Teachers	31.0%	56.0%	13.0%	0.0%
Good Schedule				
Administrators[c]	2.0%	25.5%	53.5%	19.0%
Counselors[a]	18.5%	42.0%	29.0%	10.5%
Teachers	31.0%	41.0%	20.0%	8.0%
Good Vacations				
Administrator	7.0%	23.0%	43.0%	27.0%
Counselors	12.5%	35.0%	45.0%	7.5%
Teachers	20.5%	41.0%	31.0%	7.5%

[a] N=38; [b]N=39; [c]N=43